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Lecture- 25

Reduction in public funding: public withdrawal from extension provision (partial/ full): examples

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- Reductions in public funding and public withdrawal from extension provision can occur in partial or full forms, depending on the specific circumstances and policies implemented.
- Research and innovation setbacks: Funding reductions in scientific research and innovation can hinder progress in various fields.



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- Reduced funding for research institutions and universities can limit their ability to conduct critical studies, make scientific advancements, and develop innovative technologies.
- This can have long-term consequences for societal progress and competitiveness on a global scale. Inequality and social impact:
 - ✓ Reduced public funding can disproportionately affect vulnerable populations who rely heavily on public services and support. This can exacerbate existing social inequalities and create additional barriers for disadvantaged individuals or communities, limiting their access to essential resources and opportunities.



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Partial Reduction in Public Funding/Public Withdrawal

1. Scaling back extension services: In this scenario, the government may reduce the funding allocated to extension services, leading to a decrease in the number of extension agents, limited availability of training programs, and reduced outreach efforts. Extension services may still exist but operate with fewer resources and a narrower scope of activities.

2. Targeted program cuts: Public funding cuts may target specific programs within the extension system. For instance, funding for specialized training workshops, research projects, or support for certain industries or regions could be reduced. This can result in a more limited range of services and decreased support for specific sectors or groups.



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3. Restructuring or merging of extension agencies: Rather than a complete withdrawal, a partial reduction may involve restructuring or merging existing extension agencies. This can lead to streamlining of operations, consolidation of resources, and potential changes in the focus or geographical coverage of the extension services.



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Full Withdrawal of Public Funding/Public Withdrawal:

- 1. Closure of extension offices:** In extreme cases, a government may decide to completely close extension offices, resulting in the complete withdrawal of public support for extension services. This means the termination of extension programs, discontinuation of staff positions, and the absence of any formalized public extension services.
- 2. Privatization of extension services:** Instead of completely withdrawing, a government may opt to privatize extension services, transferring the responsibility and funding to private entities. This can result in a shift towards fee-based or subscription-based extension services, potentially limiting access for small-scale farmers or economically disadvantaged individuals.



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- 3. Transition to volunteer-based or community-driven extension:** In some cases, a government may withdraw direct funding and instead encourage the establishment of volunteer-based or community-driven extension systems. While this can help maintain some level of extension provision, it relies heavily on the capacity and willingness of volunteers or community members to take on extension roles.



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Cases:

- 1. United States Cooperative Extension Service:**
In the United States, the Cooperative Extension System (CES) provides agricultural, horticultural, and educational services to rural communities. Over the years, various states have experienced reductions in public funding for CES, leading to the closure of extension offices, layoffs of extension agents, and reduced availability of extension programs. For example, in 2017, the state of Oklahoma announced a 40% budget cut to its Cooperative Extension Service, resulting in office closures and staff reductions.



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2. **India Agricultural Extension:** In some states of India, reductions in public funding have affected the agricultural extension system. For example, budget constraints have led to delayed payment of extension workers' salaries, limited availability of training programs, and reduced outreach efforts. These funding cuts have impacted the quality and effectiveness of extension services, making it challenging to address the evolving needs of farmers.



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3. United Kingdom Agricultural Extension: In the United Kingdom, funding reductions have affected agricultural extension provision. For instance, in 2010, the government implemented significant budget cuts, leading to the closure of many agricultural advisory offices and reduced availability of extension services. This withdrawal of public funding had repercussions on the support provided to farmers, such as reduced access to training, technical advice, and information.



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4. **Greece Agricultural Extension:** During the financial crisis in Greece, the country faced severe economic challenges, leading to significant reductions in public funding for various sectors, including agricultural extension services. These cuts resulted in the closure of agricultural extension offices, reduced extension staff, and limited access to advisory services for farmers. The withdrawal of public funding significantly impacted farmers' ability to access critical information and support, hindering their productivity and competitiveness.



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Conclusion

These examples illustrate the real-world implications of reductions in public funding and public withdrawal from extension provision. They demonstrate how such actions can hinder the delivery of extension services, limit support for farmers, and negatively impact agricultural productivity, rural development, and the overall well-being of communities.